

Quality Counts for Kids Task Force Meeting

July 19, 2004

Task Force Members Attendance: Task Force Chair: Ann Terrell-Milwaukee Affiliate, NBCDI Board of Directors, Gershia Coggs-Child Care Providers Helper, Shelley Cousin-Wisconsin Head Start Association, Dave Edie-UW-Extension Wisconsin Child Care Research Partnership, Lisa Furseth-Wisconsin Community Action Program, Tammy Hammell-Knowledge Learning Corporation, Dana Harmel-Wisconsin Family Child Care Association Representative, Jane Ilgen-Wisconsin Child Care Improvement Project, Laura Klingelhoets-Wisconsin Child Care Administrators Association Representative, Sandy Leibfried-Southwest Wisconsin CCR&R, Joyce Mallory-Wisconsin Council on Children and Families, Jose Martinez-United Migrant Opportunity Services, Inc., Carol Maurer-4C Community Coordinated Child Care, M. Judy Mays-Dusk 2 Dawn Child Care, Mary Motquin-Intertribal Child Care Council, Jeanette Paulson-Wisconsin Early Childhood Association, Mike Poma-Milwaukee County Department of Human Services, Barb Schuler-Wisconsin Technical College System Office, Kari Stroede-Satellite Family Child Care, Lisa Turnbull- Sawyer County Department of Human Services

Absent: Jane Robinson-The Registry

Task Force Staff Attendance: Laura Saterfield-Department of Workforce Development, Child Care Section Chief, DWD Staff: Alan Sweet, Kath McGurk, Linda Leonhart, Lee Mutchler, Jane Penner-Hoppe, Department of Health and Family Services Staff: Jill Chase, Dianne Jenkins, Mark Resheske, Julia Strong, Susan Harvey, Department of Administration Staff: Erin Fath, Department of Public Instruction Staff: Jill Haglund

Task Force Early Childhood Community Experts: Pam Boulton-UW Milwaukee, Christine Breunig, and Carrie Vollenberg-Community Coordinated Child Care, Inc., Carol Johnson and Susan Tragesser – Planning Council for Health and Human Services, Inc., Dave Riley, Mary Roach, Jason Bierbrauer-UW-Extension Research Partnership

Task Force Visitors: Josh Abrahams, Beverly Anderson, Michelle Bethke, Gabe Blood, Rebecca Brueggeman, Sonya Coster, Diana Durant, Sandra Esrael, Maureen Ittig, Gunas Madler, Rhonda Mitchell, Judy Olson, Joyce Schneider, Leticia Smith-Evans, Lisa Smith, Patrick Steliga, Pirkko Zweifel

Call to Order

Ann Terrell, Chair of the *Quality Counts for Kids* Task Force and Laura Saterfield called the meeting to order and provided a warm welcome to Task Force members, staff and visitors. Introductions were made, and the ground rules that were presented at the last Task Force meeting were again reviewed. Task Force members were reminded that they must be recognized by the Task Force Chair before providing comments. Side bar conversations between Task Force members should occur at breaks and lunch. Public comments on the quality indicators rating scale and tiered reimbursement process should be made during the public hearing process or should be sent to in writing to the Child Care Section.

Laura provided clear instruction regarding the decision making process, including the information that that the Task Force member voting procedure would include a majority vote resolution. With 20 Task Force members in attendance, 11 votes will equal a majority vote.

Ann asked for a review of the meeting minutes from the June 21, 2004 Task Force Meeting. Dave Edie moved and Mary Motquin seconded that the minutes of the June 21, 2004 meeting be approved. Motion passed.

The Charge of the Task Force is to develop recommendations on specific quality indicators within child care programs that will be provided to the Governor. Quality indicators are being identified to 1.) help parents recognize and choose higher quality care and 2.) to provide higher quality early learning experiences for children in those programs.

Child Care Budget Presentation

Lee Mutchler presented a power point overview of the Child Care Budget Structure, and identified child care funding allocations. The presentation provided detail on the three main allocations within the child care

budget: Direct Child Care Subsidies (including Wisconsin Shares, Migrant and Contracted Child Care and local administrative costs), Indirect Child Care (including quality improvement activities and state child care administration) and Local Pass Through Grants. In addition to these main allocations, the Early Childhood Excellence Center funding and the Head Start funding are allocated separately.

Within the full \$1.3 Billion Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Budget in Wisconsin, 51 percent (\$635.8 Million during the biennium) of the budget is for Direct, Indirect, Local Pass-Thru or Early Childhood Excellence Centers.

Lee provided a breakdown of the 2003-2005 child care budget:

Child Care Budget Breakdown for 2003-2005 Biennium		
\$635.8 Million		
<u>Direct Child Care</u> \$606.7 Million	<u>Indirect Child Care</u> \$19.2 Million	<u>Local Pass-thru Grants</u> \$4.9 Million
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WI Shares Subsidy • Contracted Child Care • Migrant Child Care • Child Care Administration (county/tribal) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DWD Administration (Child Care Section) • Licensing (DHFS) • TEACH/REWARD • CCR&R 	<u>Early Childhood Excellence Centers</u> \$5 Million
Head Start, Head Start Collaboration Project and Child Care Data Sharing grants budgeted separately from TANF and related programming budgets and not included in \$635.8 Million. (Clarification: In addition to Federal Head Start grants, Wisconsin allocates a supplement from TANF in the amount of \$3.5 Million annually which is not included in the \$635.8 Million above.)		

Following Lee's presentation the Task Force members asked the following questions of Lee:

- What is the security of TANF funding for the future? The current TANF Block Grant funds are authorized through a continuing resolution through September 30, 2004. It is anticipated that TANF funding levels will continue at the previous resolution level until a new reauthorization bill is passed – possibly after the November election.
- Where will the dollars come from to support a quality indicators rating system/tiered reimbursement system – both implementation and ongoing costs? Quality improvement initiatives have traditionally been funded through the indirect child care budget. Pass through funding and early childhood excellence center funding also have the goals of improving the quality of child care in Wisconsin. It is the expectation that the administration will develop a child care proposal that will include a quality indicators/tiered reimbursement system proposal.
- How is the Early Childhood Excellence Center funding allocated? Laura Saterfield indicated: In the current biennium \$5 Million is available for the Early Childhood Excellence Center allocation. Of this amount, \$3.5 Million is awarded to 18 Centers of Excellence Sites, \$1 Million is available for accreditation grants, and \$500,000 is awarded to the University of Wisconsin-Extension for evaluation and technical assistance to Centers of Excellence.
- If state government puts up more match dollars (GPR), will the child care "pass-thru" funding be used somewhere else? It is difficult to indicate what amount, if any, will be available for pass- thru funding in the next child care budget. Decisions are yet to be made on the Departments biennial budget request.

Task Force Members Child Care Budget Presentation Comments

The following comments were made by Task Force Members after the budget presentation:

- ❖ Once a quality rating system/tiered reimbursement system is designed – how will it be funded, and how will it be sustained? The Task Force needs to develop a system to assure that whatever is recommended will be implemented and can be sustained.
- ❖ In the political arena that the state is currently in, Wisconsin needs to use whatever funding that is currently available to improve the quality of child care programs. Funding may be reallocated, but

no new funding is assumed. While the Task Force needs to be realistic in their recommendations, the Task Force also needs to be faithful to the charge of the *KidsFirst: Quality Counts for Kids* initiative.

❖ Is the Task Force charge to:

- 1.) Develop a set of recommendations for the quality rating scale/tiered reimbursement system?
or
- 2.) Develop a funding proposal?

Ann Terrell provided clarification and indicated that the charge of the Task Force is to develop a realistic set of recommendations for the development of a quality rating system/tiered reimbursement system.

Ann requested clarification from Lee regarding the composition of families receiving Wisconsin Shares child care subsidy. Lee indicated that W-2 participants are approximately 20 percent of all low income families receiving child care services. Note: According to the Child Care Data Warehouse, 16 percent of the 30,044 families who received Wisconsin Shares benefits also participated in W-2.

Quality Indicators Rating System Options

Dave Riley and the UW-Extension, Child Care Research Partnership provided a power point presentation to the Task Force Members. Two documents were shared, the power point and a separate narrative report. The smallest number of options that represent the best ideas from national research of quality indicator rating scales are presented in four models. Dave provided a key point to the Task Force regarding a goal of what a quality indicator rating system should be: It should motivate change in providers/programs to move towards higher quality. When comparing quality rating scale options, the following criteria should be used:

1. Simple: Keep the quality rating scale as simple as possible for the consumer. Make accessible on a web page and/or other easy to locate material.
2. Valid: Make the quality rating scale valid for child care programs/providers. It must be viewed as an accurate measure of quality that is fair and objective. The linkage to research-based quality must be clear.
3. Realistic: The quality rating scale must be viewed as a realistic route to improving the quality within a child care program. The rating scale, coupled with a tiered reimbursement system, must be seen as an encouragement to programs to develop a quality improvement plan that can improve the quality within the program in 1 one to two year period.
4. Efficient: The quality rating scale must be efficient for state government to administer and monitor. The costs of implementation and sustainability must be realistic.

Dave indicated to the Task Force that each of the models presented have strengths and weaknesses. Two somewhat competing aspects of the options are validity vs. efficiency. Validity strives for a comprehensive approach, whereas efficiency strives for simplicity. It will be up to the Task Force to make decisions on what “absolutely needs to be included” in the quality rating scale vs. what is “good to include in the quality rating scale, but the cost may make it prohibitive”.

Task Force Membership Quality Indicator Options Requests/Comments

The Registry:

- As the Quality Indicators Rating options review and selection process moves forward, it is necessary to ensure that any changes made to The Registry Career Ladder be made with the *KidsFirst: Quality Counts for Kids* Task Force membership vision in mind. Efficiency, consistency and accuracy must be the goals of any new certificate developed to identify individual provider education attained. It has been requested that The Registry provide a brief presentation at the August 18th Task Force meeting on the current Registry Certificate, the proposed changes to the Certificate, and the process for determining what changes will be made and how they will be implemented.

Parent Information:

- Child care dollars available should be used to first to provide supports to programs to help reach higher quality, then additional dollars/or re-allocation of dollars will be needed to monitor and assess programs. Until quality child care programming is available for parents to choose, it may not be a wise use of funding to complete environmental rating scales on programs. Parents need quality child care settings for children across the state.

- In order to generate parent buy-in to a quality rating system, parents will need to be able to have high quality programming to choose from in their own local area.

Education/Qualifications:

- Credit based instruction, both on site and via on line access must be developed to reach out to child care providers in non-traditional formats and avenues.
- Teacher qualifications can be developed both through credit based instruction and through a mentoring relationship that models best practices. Competency based instruction, positive teacher-child interactions, and consistent caregivers all lead to positive outcomes for children.

Quality Rating Scale:

- Do not exclude child care programs from entering into the quality indicators rating scale. By developing a scale with multiple levels, it is possible to include programs that are entry level (example level 1), up to the highest quality of programming available (example level 5). A quality indicator rating system designed this way will be most meaningful to parents, and provide incentives to providers to come into the system.
- Turnover of staff in child care programs remains high. The quality rating scale selected needs to be an incentive to programs to work towards higher quality. A well developed child care program environment can provide a higher quality setting for children. Rating scale scores can provide a picture of the quality of the child care program.

Accreditation:

- The Task Force is encouraged to review the Head Start Federal Performance Standards and the City of Madison program standards and compare these to NAEYC standards. Staff to the Task Force will provide further information to the Task Force by the next meeting.

Supportive Services:

- In order for a quality indicators rating scale to be implemented, supports need to be available and accessible to the child care workforce. For example, supports include accessing credit based education, program environment materials, professional development planning, substitute pools, etc.

Assessment/Observation/Quality Rating:

- Whichever agency/organization is ultimately responsible for program assessment/observation/site visit quality indicator rating must assure that cultural and linguistic diversity of assessment staff is reflective of the area of the state that they monitor.
- The director supports the program. The teacher creates the quality of the program for the children.

Task Force Membership Questions

Who will be responsible:

- Multiple organizations/agencies complete site visits to regulated child care programs. How can this be maximized to ensure that program quality indicator criteria is met, without duplication of effort?
- What agency/organization will complete the child care program quality indicator rating?
- What agency/organization will collect and maintain child care program quality indicator rating data?
- What agency will monitor programs to assure quality rating is accurate?

Regulation Questions:

- Head Start delegate programs may have multiple sites, with separate quality ratings in the future, how will this be addressed? Is this any different than a large direct care child care organization with multiple sites?
- Some child care programs are not licensed, but instead are run by a school board. Will this be an issue in a quality rating scale system?
- Will certified programs be included within the quality indicator rating scale?
- Will a minimum of a high school diploma or equivalency degree be required?

Voluntary or Mandatory:

- Will the quality rating scale be a voluntary process for child care programs, or will it be mandatory?

Parent Information:

- How can we assure parents that the information in the Rating System will reflect the most current information – both regulatory compliance issues, and child care provider/program staff educational levels?

Quality Indicators Rating Scale Questions:

- If Wisconsin develops a quality indicators rating scale based on points, will teacher education, accreditation status or environmental rating scale scores be worth the same amount of points, or will points be established according to a priority or hierarchy?
- Will experience be a factor within the quality indicator rating scale?
- Is the quality indicator rating scale only for programs that serve low-income children?
- Should a rating scale include the issue of the completion of a General Equivalency Degree or other High School Equivalency Degree?

Supportive Services:

- How will cultural and linguistic diversity needs and accessibility to child care supports necessary for program quality improvement be developed and provided to the child care workforce?
- Can the quality indicators rating scale be implemented regionally-where current local funding is available to provide necessary supports?

Wisconsin's Child Care Workforce

The following information is from the University of Wisconsin-Extension Child Care Research Partnership: **Losing Ground or Keeping Up? A Report on the Wisconsin Early Care and Education Workforce, 2001** <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/flp/wccrp/pdfs/weca.pdf> and **Trends Over Time: Wisconsin's Child Care Workforce** <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/flp/wccrp/pdfs/trends.pdf>

2001 Education Associate Degree or Above	2001 250,000 Children in Care	2001 Annual Turnover Rate
Licensed Group Child Care Center Teachers 28 %	2,349 Licensed Child Care Centers	40% Licensed Group Centers
Licensed Group Child Care Center Directors 47%		
Licensed Family Child Care 20 %	8,167 Licensed and Certified Programs	32% < 2 years Family Child Care

4-C Quality Indicators Project Presentation

Christine Breunig and Carrie Vollenburg provided a power point presentation on the Community Coordinated Child Care, Inc. Quality Indicators Project. Christine provided the Task Force Members with information regarding the research and decisions that were made in establishing the two indicators that are used by the Madison Community Coordinated Child Care, Inc. (4C) in the Quality Indicators Project (QIP) piloted July 1, 2004. Child Care consumers and stakeholders were surveyed, and quality indicators were reviewed, based on national research and best practice. The criteria used during the selection of quality indicators:

- Objective,
- Research-based,
- Easily and regularly available to CCRR agencies, and
- Fit within the existing NACCRR aware fields (CCRR agency data collection software).

The CCRR agencies across the state have been careful to not rank or rate child care programs in the past. CCRR agencies have worked to provide accurate information to parents. The National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies began looking at Quality Ranking information approximately four years ago. The goal of any child care provider/program rating system is for a CCRR agency to remain objective while providing the most up to date, accurate quality indicator information to parents.

The two indicators selected for the QIP pilot project are Enforcement Actions (regulatory compliance) and Accreditation (NAEYC, NAFCC, NSACA, Madison Accreditation). The 4-C pilot does not include certification enforcement actions. Certification enforcement actions are not comparable to licensing enforcement actions, and would not provide clear information to parents to make child care program choices. The Bureau of Regulation and Licensing provides enforcement action information to the CCRR Network Office, and the Network office disseminates the information to each of the 16 CCRR agencies. However, when enforcement actions are taken and noted on the referral form, no detailed information is included; only a recommendation to the parents to contact licensing for specific details.

The 4-C office is currently completing an evaluation of the Quality Indicators Project pilot. Evaluation surveys are being sent to all parents requesting referral listings from the CCRR. Specific data is being requested from the survey tool during the time frame of July 1 through October 8. An evaluation report will be completed by the CCRR agency by November 30, 2004.

Task Force Members Questions

- Did the Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies/Network (CCRR/CCRRN) complete research on what other states have included as quality indicators, and how quality indicator ratings have increased quality in a state?
- In other states, what information is shared by CCRR agencies with parents regarding child care program quality?

Environmental Rating Scale Discussion

Task Force Members discussed Environmental Rating Scales. Observed quality and program quality correlation was identified. Throughout the day Task Force Members discussed the pros and cons of including the Environmental Rating Scale in a Quality Indicator Rating System. The following major issues were indicated:

- Environmental Rating Scale Scores are generally a good predictor of program quality.
- The majority of child care programs across the state have not had an environmental rating scale score assessed.
- Environmental Rating Scales observations have identified improvement costs associated with classroom observations that may be prohibitive for some programs to complete.
- The reliability of some Environmental Rating Scale assessors has been questioned.
- The financial cost of completing this indicator may be prohibitive to including within a statewide quality indicator rating system. This indicator may only be available as a choice in certain areas of the state, including Milwaukee and the Fox Valley.
- The Environmental Rating Scale may be used as a tool for programs that are working towards NAEYC Accreditation. Is the Environmental Rating Scale a tool to support accreditation?
- Is the Environmental Rating Scale score itself the quality indicator, is it the process of preparing for the completion of an environmental rating a tool that is useful in developing a quality improvement plan?
- Observation of teacher-child interaction is essential for determining the quality of the child care program.

For further information on environmental rating scales, see:

http://tnstarquality.org/refs/using_ers_teacher.pdf and <http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~ecers/>

Voting Decisions

The following information was completed through a "Straw Vote" process with 20 Task Force Members.

1.) Style – Building Blocks vs. Points vs. Hybrid

Style	Green	Yellow	Red	Average
Building Blocks	9	9	2	2.4
Points	4	13	3	2.1
Hybrid	8	2	10	1.9

2.) Quality Indicators

Quality Indicator	Green	Yellow	Red	Average
Licensed/certified	19	1	0	3.0

Regulatory compliance	20	0	0	3.0
Staff Qualifications (for centers)	20	0	0	3.0
Director/family child care provider qualifications	20	0	0	3.0
Accreditation	11	9	0	2.6
Environmental Rating Scores	9	6	5	2.2
Learning environment/curriculum	6	14	0	2.3
Policies and practices	10	10	0	2.5

3.) Additional Voting

	Green	Yellow	Red	Average
Voluntary Participation in the Quality Rating System (versus Mandatory)	0	13	7	1.7

The Data Collection vote was not held, as the Task Force Members felt as though they did not yet have enough information. Questions that will need to be answered by the Task Force are if the current amount of data collected will provide enough information for a quality indicator rating system, or new data will need to be identified and collected? Will that information be collected in current automation systems, or will a new system, or linkages to current systems need to be designed? How will information be kept accurately and up to date?

Requested Materials

The Task Force has requested that staff come back with additional quality indicator rating system options that include information as discussed at the meeting. Further information has also been requested on what data is currently available in Wisconsin, what other state experiences have been, and how states have funded quality indicator rating systems. These materials will be developed and disseminated to Task Force Members.

Future Meeting Dates

The Task Force determined that an additional meeting is necessary to review requested materials and to make further decisions on quality indicators. The next meeting is planned for August 2, 2004.

Monday, August 2, 2004	12:00 noon to 4:00 p.m.	Quality Indicator Model Review and Decision
Wednesday, August 18, 2004	10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.	Tiered Reimbursement Model Presentation
Monday, September 20, 2004	10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.	Draft Report Complete
Wednesday, October 20, 2004	10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.	Public Hearing on Draft Report
Monday, November 15, 2004	10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.	Public Comment Review
Monday, December 6, 2004	10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.	Final Recommendation for the Governor